

*2021–22 Transformational Ideas Initiative Project*  
**Nourish & Grow: MCW–Green Bay Student  
Garden Initiative**



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**Project Background**

Due to the COVID–19 pandemic, mental health has been tested in an unprecedented way. As first–year medical students, we have been unable to connect with our peers and faculty in a normative format and working to find our sense of mattering within this new community we’ve joined has proven difficult. Outside of the setting of a global pandemic, we saw a need for a community gathering space where people can come together to discuss health topics to supplement our formal medical training (personal wellness, nutrition, community, belonging, sustainability, social determinants of health) and establish a gathering place just to unwind with friends.

**Project Plan**

The MCW–GB campus garden program aims to build community and provide an outdoor gathering space. In addition to garden maintenance, each gardening session will begin with conversation starter for participants to discuss topics related to personal and community wellness. “Wellness Minute” conversation starters may include gratitude, mindful movement, nourishing/fueling the body with garden products, mindfulness meditation, access to produce, and sustainability/environmental wellness. The social media arm aims to expand on

the “Wellness Minute” topics and highlight the importance of the work with the broader community.

In addition to gardening, we hope to create a place of gathering for our peers. We intend to host events, barbecues, cooking classes, and other social activities in this community space. We also intend to expand our “space” into the greater De Pere/Green Bay area by taking group outings to the farmer’s market and other local outdoor events.

Overall, we hope the garden program builds a sense of community, improves student mental health/wellness, fosters a sense of belonging, and increases awareness of the impact that nutrition and social determinants of health have on overall wellness.